



**OPPOSE: H.B. No. 6659 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR. (Elementary and Secondary Education Agencies)**

February 23, 2023

Co-chairs Senator Osten and Representative Walker, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee. I am Lourdes Delgado, Director of the Faith & Education Coalition (FEC) of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference of Connecticut (NHCLC,CT). We support Advancing Student Achievement by advocating for high and comparable standards and local accountability to ensure all children have access to quality education regardless of zip code, income, or race. In addition, we provide training and resources for our parents toward "Raising Highly Capable Kids".

Sadly, the governor's proposed budget does little toward improving the outcomes of our Connecticut students living in homes and attending schools with limited resources. It is almost impossible to achieve high academic outcomes under these circumstances.

**T409** reflects **NO** increase for Charter Schools. Meanwhile the overall student data outcomes have met or surpassed those of traditional schools. In 2018 we met in Danbury with faith leaders who expressed they wanted a charter school in their community. It is 2023 and five years later no such school has been funded. If this option is producing positive outcomes elsewhere for our students, why is it not being replicated in this city?

**T416** reflects **NO** increase for Bilingual Education. Additional English Language Learner (ELL) enrollment substantiates the need for more funding yet this budget does not reflect the need to further provide services for ELL students. Since 2018 there has been an increase in Connecticut's population:

2018-2019= 40,441(7.62%)  
2019-2020 = 43,569(8.25%)  
2020-2021= 42,474(8.28%)  
2021-2022= 45,271(8.81%)  
2022-2023= 49,833(9.70%)

**T423** reflects **NO** increase for After School Programs. The best prevention is an option and for many of our students from lower socio-economic backgrounds that is the **ONLY** way to ensure they are supervised after school.

The Education Committee Bill **H.B No. 5003** offers more clarity to ensure equitable funding for education yet it is not evidenced in the governor's budget. This bill includes a financial audit but also needs to include monitoring of achievement. Ensure the funding adheres to the intended outcomes. This accountability needs to be applied to **ALL** areas of Appropriation. On behalf of our membership I ask that you include stringent accountability measures to ensure direct instructional support by the most qualified staff to meet the needs for students experiencing any education gap.

Not a week goes by that a parent does not communicate with us to inquire about other education options for their children. This is not a positive reflection of our schools. It is unacceptable and embarrassing that in the year 2023, in Connecticut, a student serviced by any of our Public Schools would not qualify for higher learning without requiring post-high school remediation courses to begin their college career. Our students deserve to attain high academic achievement.

We entrust our taxpayer dollars to you. Social ills, many of which you will be appropriating during this legislative session need to be avoided. For example, "2/3 students who cannot read professionally by the end of the fourth grade will end up in jail or on welfare." (<https://www.begintoread.com/research/literacystatistics.html>). If we do not invest now, we end up paying a lot more later.

The more educated the community, the more economically developed our community will become. Be on the offense and exercise due diligence when appropriating our taxpayer funds to ensure equitable high quality education.

Respectfully,

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